

OSLC Treatment Foster Care

Brief Program Description

The Oregon Social Learning Center (OSLC) Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (TFC) Program was developed as an alternative to institutional, residential, and group care placement for teenagers with histories of chronic and severe criminal behavior. In most communities, such juveniles are placed in out-of-home care settings prior to being sent to closed custody incarceration. Typically, these settings include some type of group home or cottage on a larger institutional campus where youngsters reside with others who have similar problems and histories of offending. On a continuum of care, TFC is a relatively non-restrictive community-based placement that can be used in lieu of residential or group care or that can be used for youth transitioning back to the community from such settings. TFC is less expensive than placement in group, residential care, or institutional settings.

Community families are recruited to provide TFC-placed adolescents with treatment and intensive supervision at home, in school, and in the community. TFC emphasizes clear and consistent limits with follow-through on consequences, positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, a relationship with a mentoring adult, and separation from delinquent peers. The program targets teenagers with histories of chronic and severe criminal behavior at risk of incarceration. In TFC, adolescents are placed, singly or in twos, in a family setting for six to nine months. Community families are recruited, trained, and supported to provide well-supervised placements and treatment. TFC parents are part of the treatment team along with program staff. They are paid a monthly salary and a small stipend to cover expenses. The Core Components for Youth include daily structure and support, an individualized point system, a weekly individual treatment, consistent teaching-oriented nonphysical discipline, and psychiatric consultation and medication management as needed. The Core Components for Families include weekly family treatment with a strong skills focus, instruction in behavior management methods, frequent home visits with on-call and crisis backup, an aftercare parent group, and access to 24-hour, 7-day on-call staff contact. The Core Components for Foster Parents include daily telephone calls, support and training, and 24-hour, 7-day on-call staff availability and crisis intervention.

Evaluations of TFC have demonstrated that program youth compared to control group youth spent 60 percent fewer days incarcerated at 12-month follow-up, had significantly fewer subsequent arrests, ran away from their program three times less often, had significantly less hard drug use, and had quicker community placement from more

restrictive settings. Results showed that youth spent significantly fewer days in lock-up during another 1- and 2-year follow-up study and significantly fewer youth were ever incarcerated following treatment. A significant relationship was found between the number of days in treatment and the number of days of subsequent incarceration for youth in the TFC group.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

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